

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Claim 1 (previously presented): A method for identifying users in a digital camera including an image photographing unit photographing an image of an object, an image processing unit performing a predetermined image processing to a photographed image input from the image photographing unit and outputting the processed image, a data storing unit temporarily storing the image output from the image processing unit, and a recording medium inserted in a recording medium interface and storing the digital image data, in which multiple users use the digital camera, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) immediately after the digital camera is turned on according to a command by a user, receiving user identification information;

(b) determining whether matched user identification information exists by comparing the input user identification information and user identification information stored in the digital camera relative to each of the multiple users;

(c) if in Step (b) it is determined that the matched user identification information exists, loading a setting of the digital camera corresponding to the matched user identification information;

(d1) after Step (c), determining whether an existing folder used by the identified user exists;

(d2) if in Step (d1) it is determined that the existing folder used by the identified user exists, designating the existing folder as a location to store images that are captured by the identified user;

(d3) otherwise, if in Step (d1) it is determined that the existing folder used by the identified user does not exist, creating a new folder for the identified user;

(e) the user performing work using the digital camera; and

(f) storing a setting state of the camera as information intrinsic to the user according to a turn-off command by the user.

Claim 2 (canceled)

Claim 3 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising Step (g) of, if it is determined in Step (b) that the input user identification information does not match the user information stored in the digital camera relative to each of the multiple users, determining whether a frequency of input of the user identification information exceeds a predetermined number and, if it is determined that the frequency does not exceed the predetermined number, moving to Step (a).

Claim 4 (original): The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising steps of:
(h) if it is determined in Step (b) that the input identification information does not match the stored user information, loading a setting of the digital camera as a basic setting; and
(i) creating a new user folder.

Claim 5 (original): The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein a step of setting read protection with respect to an image file stored in the user folder, or to be stored therein, and the user folder, is provided after Step (e).

Claims 6-24 (canceled)

Claim 25 (previously presented): The method of claim 1 further comprising, before Step (a):
detecting a command initiated by a user for turning on the digital camera; and
substantially immediately after the detecting step, prompting the user to input user identification information.

Claim 26 (previously presented): The method of claim 25 wherein the input user identification information is an alphanumeric password.

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Claim 27 (previously presented): The method of claim 26 wherein the alphanumeric password includes at least four characters.

Claim 28 (previously presented): A method for identifying a user of a digital camera that is used by multiple users, the method comprising:

- detecting activation of the digital camera by a user;
- immediately after the detecting step, prompting the user for an alphanumeric password;
- determining if the user is a registered user according to the alphanumeric password received from the user; and
- if the user is determined to be a registered user relative to the determining step, designating a user-specific folder as a location for storing and retrieving image files resulting from the user performing work with the camera.

Claim 29 (previously presented): The method of claim 28 further comprising protecting at least one of the user-specific folder and at least one image file of the image files from being accessed by other users.

Claim 30 (previously presented): The method of claim 28 wherein the determining step comprises comparing the alphanumeric password with user information stored in a data structure relative to the multiple users.

Claim 31 (previously presented): The method of claim 28 wherein the designating step further comprises:

- determining if the user-specific folder exists in a user-removable storage medium;
- and
- if the user-specific folder is determined to not exist, creating a new folder.

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Claim 32 (previously presented): The method of claim 28 further comprising, if the user is determined to be a registered user relative to the determining step, loading a setting of the digital camera according to the alphanumeric password.

Claim 33 (previously presented): The method of claim 28 further comprising:
if the user is not determined to be a registered user relative to the determining step, repeating the querying and determining steps a predetermined number of times;
if the user is not determined to be a registered user relative to the repeating step, loading a setting of the digital camera as a basic setting; and
creating a new user folder.

Claim 34 (previously presented): A method for identifying a user of a digital camera that is used by multiple users, the method comprising:
detecting activation of the digital camera by a user;
immediately after the detecting step, prompting the user for user-identifying information;
determining if the user is a registered user according to the user-identifying information received from the user; and
if the user is determined to be a registered user relative to the determining step, directing image files, which result from the user performing work with the camera, to be stored to and retrieved from a user-specific folder.

Claim 35 (previously presented): The method of claim 34 further comprising protecting at least one of the user-specific folder and at least one image file of the image files from being accessed by other users.

Claim 36 (previously presented): The method of claim 34 wherein the determining step comprises comparing the user-identifying information with user information stored in a data structure relative to the multiple users.

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Claim 37 (previously presented): The method of claim 34 wherein the directing step further comprises:

determining if the user-specific folder exists in a user-removable storage medium;
and
if the user-specific folder is determined to not exist, creating a new folder.

Claim 38 (previously presented): The method of claim 34 further comprising, if the user is determined to be a registered user relative to the determining step, loading a setting of the digital camera according to the user-identifying information.

Claim 39 (previously presented): The method of claim 34 further comprising:
if the user is not determined to be a registered user relative to the determining step, repeating the querying and determining steps a predetermined number of times;
if the user is not determined to be a registered user relative to the repeating step, loading a setting of the digital camera as a basic setting; and
creating a new user folder.

Claim 40 (previously presented): The method of claim 34 wherein the user-identifying information is an alphanumeric password.

Claim 41 (previously presented): The method of claim 40 wherein the alphanumeric password includes at least four characters.